

Washington, D.C. - Today, members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition honored California Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) for his leadership in restoring fiscal responsibility and accountability to the federal government. As a leading member of the Blue Dogs and senior member of the House Agriculture Committee, Representative Costa has made significant strides in restoring the fiscal stability and economic security of the United States by implementing common-sense policies such as pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) budgeting.

Rep. Costa recently helped craft a responsible Farm Bill that complies with PAYGO rules and adheres to the standards of fiscal discipline that the Blue Dogs have so fervently advocated throughout the 110th Congress.

“As a leading member of the Blue Dog Coalition, Representative Costa has played a major role in putting our country back on track to economic stability after years of reckless fiscal practices by President Bush and the Republican majority in Congress,” said Representative Mike Ross, Blue Dog Co-Chair for Communications. “With the Farm Bill, Rep. Costa demonstrated that he is willing to make the difficult decisions necessary to restore the fiscal integrity of this country.”

“The Blue Dog Coalition is a powerful voice in the House of Representatives, and I am very proud to be a member,” said Costa. “Restoring fiscal discipline to our government is the first step to securing the future of this nation for our children and grandchildren. With the President incurring more foreign-held debt during his time in office than the previous 42 presidents combined, my fellow Blue Dogs and I know it's time to get a handle on our spending, and we need to work in a bipartisan fashion to get our fiscal house in order. I will continue to work hard to ensure PAYGO standards are upheld with each and every bill we pass, and look forward to continued work with my Blue Dog colleagues pursuing additional strategies with other coalitions for our nation's financial future.”

Under the leadership of Representative Costa and the Blue Dog Coalition, the House rules package for the 110th Congress includes key principles of the Coalition's plan to restore fiscal responsibility and accountability to the federal government. Specifically, the package requires pay-as-you-go budget discipline, known as “PAYGO,” with no new deficit spending. This rule was in place when the nation had its first balanced budget in nearly 30 years from 1998 to 2001.

The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that

transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the United States. Currently there are 47 members of the Blue Dog Coalition.

Representative Costa is currently featured on the Blue Dog Coalition website, located at <http://www.house.gov/ross/BlueDogs/>.